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The President's Daily Brief

~~*Top Secret*~~ 8 November 1966



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DAILY BRIEF
9 NOVEMBER 1966

1. South Vietnam

The constituent assembly, with election of its various committees out of the way, has turned back to the articles in its charter which gives the present military government veto power over any draft constitution passed by less than a two-thirds vote.

Today's session was primarily an attack on this article, with demands that it be either abolished or amended. The assembly appeared fairly well united in its opposition. Representatives of all but one of the voting blocs spoke against the article. At the moment, however, most deputies appear inclined toward a compromise rather than a confrontation with the military directorate.

Even the assembly's discussion of the article, however, will antagonize the directorate, which is adamant on the issue. In the present atmosphere, still heated from the regional rivalries that underlay the recent cabinet crisis, a disruptive exchange between assembly and government could develop.

2. Soviet Union

Soviet officials in London are busily denying that they invited British Foreign Secretary Brown to Moscow. They say the initiative came from the British side.

3. South Vietnam

Consumer prices, which had risen for two consecutive weeks, fell about four percent between 31 October and 4 November. This drop resulted from increased deliveries of foodstuffs--especially live hogs--into Saigon following the 1 November national holiday.

The embassy reports a gloomy rice situation, however, with deliveries from the delta for the first nine months of the year 30 percent below those for the same period last year. The embassy estimates that at this rate South Vietnam--a traditional rice exporter--will have to import close to 500,000 tons this year.

4. Guinea

Sekou Touré delivered an inflammatory diatribe against the United States at a public rally in Conakry this afternoon. He laid full blame on the US for Ghana's detention of the Guinean Foreign Minister.

So far Touré has ordered the US to get Peace Corps people out of Guinea within a week and has withdrawn Pan American's landing rights. He says Guinea can get along without US aid.

Ambassador McIlvaine expects more trouble. He does not see how diplomatic relations can be continued.

5. France

There will be more trouble with the French if an ailing French computer firm controlled by General Electric goes through with its plans to let go a large number of workers.

The French government had agreed to General Electric's purchase of this firm only when it became clear that it could not survive otherwise. Paris is determined to be self-sufficient in computers and would probably accuse General Electric of placing its economic interests above the French national interest.

6. West Germany

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7. Latin America

The "race" to buy jet aircraft which the press has been playing up has little substance behind it.

Talk of an arms race apparently began when Chile announced its purchase of 21 British Hawker Hunter fighters after learning that Argentina was buying 25 A-U's from the US. Both deals had in fact been in the works for months.

Peru has also been shopping for more modern aircraft. All three countries have obsolescent jets and have been under domestic political pressure to modernize.

In spite of further reports that Brazil is looking for tanks and Venezuela for ships, there has actually been no unusual increase in Latin American arms purchases this year.

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